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ABSTRACT

The need for school communities that provide quality education for a diverse student body has never been greater. Increasingly interdependent global economies require schools that will create a flexible and creative work force, not simply trained workers. The development of learner-centered schools is important to meeting these challenges. Three papers in this report examine why restructuring is needed, what it entails, and how it should be done. The first paper, "Creating Multicultural Learner-Centered Schools" (James A. Banks) calls for a reexamination and reconstruction of the goals, values, and purposes of schools. Creating multicultural and learner-centered schools requires leadership, curriculum restructuring, and a reassessment of how students learn. Three areas of concern are the social construction of knowledge, caring, and the motivation to act. The second paper, "Building Learner-Centered Schools: Developing Professional Capacity, Policy, and Political Consensus" (Linda Darling-Hammond) argues that curriculum changes that reflect students' needs and diversity must have organizational support to grow and persist. Professional, policy, and political development all must be addressed. The third paper, "Restructuring and Possibility" (Maxine Greene) examines the place of the individual and collectives in creating change. Unity of thought and action are important in creating learner-centered schools that are communities of students and teachers. (Contains 61 references.) (JPT)

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Building Learner-Centered Schools: Three Perspectives

James A. Banks
Linda Darling-Hammond
Maxine Greene

Foreword by Ann Lieberman

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with a Foreword by Ann Lieberman

November 1992

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Linda Darling-Hammond
Ann Lieberman
Co-Directors, NCREST

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Toward Learner-Centered Schools

Ann Lieberman

The need to create school communities that provide quality education for an increasingly diverse student body in America's schools has never been greater. Rapid and deep social, cultural, and political changes produce unprecedented challenges and opportunities for schools to change. And change they must. Increasingly interdependent and fluid global economies demanding a more flexible and creative work force require schools to teach critical thinking rather than simply train workers. The survival and development of a democratic society require schools to become places where students and teachers can participate actively in creating learning communities that encourage both individual and collective responsibility.

Against this background, the necessity for developing learner-centered schools -- an increasingly powerful concept in the effort to restructure our nation's schools -- is readily apparent. The three papers presented here enable us to better understand the *why* of this restructuring, the *what* of what it looks like, and the *how* of going about the work of creating such schools and the systems that support them.

Jim Banks presents a fundamental challenge to educators, calling for a "reexamination and reconstruction of the goals, values, and purposes of schools." Creating schools that are authentically multicultural and learner-centered will take visionary leaders, the restructuring of the curriculum, and a rethinking of how students construct knowledge. Banks points out three major areas of concern for builders of such schools: the social construction of *knowledge*, the ability to *care*, and the motivation to *act*. Drawing on research, his own and others', he describes environments that help students understand the full nature of human experience as they grapple with broader perspectives of a "transformative" curriculum that includes "voices" of the text (writers of history and literature) as well as the "voices" of students and teachers. Challenging the materialistic nature of our culture, Banks uses research to illustrate how to create conditions that encourage sharing and caring for others instead of uncritical self-aggrandizement. He emphasizes the importance of students being involved in social action, playing constructive roles in efforts to solve social problems.

Linda Darling-Hammond argues persuasively for the need to build and secure institutional capacities to create and maintain learner-centered schools. If we are to have schools that consider student needs, interests, and talents, and that reflect deeply held values of human diversity, we must not only engender a curriculum that reflects these ideas, but a school organized to provide conditions supporting such a curriculum. She considers problems of longevity and continuity when she asks, "How do we make it last when we get it?" Referring to past reform eras, when similar ideas were propounded, implemented, and subsequently lost to new social and political imperatives, she suggests workable solutions that

require ongoing attention: *professional development*, which includes a process for continuous learning as part of a culture of support and inquiry provided by facilitators, networks, and collaborations; *policy development*, which affects the ways that teachers are certified, licensed, and accredited as well as areas of curriculum and assessment that support and shape a professional structure of teaching; and *political development*, which includes organizing and speaking out for a coherent program of educational reform that unites the educational community in building the capacity to change.

Reminding us that routine, the dailiness of our lives, keeps us from thinking seriously about the necessity to imagine and act on new possibilities, Maxine Greene confronts us with ourselves as individuals and the collectivities of which we are a part. She urges us toward a unity of thought and action, following a tradition emanating from John Dewey and his contemporaries, continued by progressive educators such as Lillian Weber and Deborah Meier, and including modern intellectuals like Vaclav Havel. Greene warns that the path to change is crowded with obstacles. Encouraging us to engage with our students, reflect on our experiences, and continuously learn from artists and writers who struggle to understand the complexities of the human condition, she helps us to see how important we can be to building a more just society, in our schools and with our students. We come to see that learner-centered schools are indeed communities of students *and* teachers who are engaged in a mutual pursuit of making meaning and making sense of their world.

Creating Multicultural Learner-Centered Schools

James A. Banks

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Schools must become learner-centered to meet the needs of today's diverse students. To create effective multicultural, learner-centered schools for the 21st century, educators must respond to the increasing class, cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of U.S. students. In this paper, I describe a set of societal conditions to which schools must respond in order for the United States to enter the 21st century as an economically strong, humane, and democratic society. I also describe some of the salient characteristics of effective multicultural, learner-centered schools.

Our nation faces a number of serious problems and issues that the schools can help to solve if they are substantially reformed and restructured. While reforming and restructuring schools can help solve some of the nation's important problems, schools alone cannot solve all of them. A significant problem faced by public schools is rising expectations with little societal support or increased resources to meet these escalating expectations (Cremin, 1990). Reforms within the nation's schools must be accompanied and supported by other significant national changes, including increased economic opportunities for all of the nation's citizens, adequate health care, youth development, and family support (Kozol, 1991; Wilson, 1987; Schorr, 1988). Students from all social-class groups will be motivated to achieve in school only when they perceive opportunities in the wider society (Ogbu, 1990). Schools are limited in what they can achieve alone. I will focus on school reform in this paper, however, because I believe that school reform can succeed within the context of our existing society, as demonstrated by the research of Comer (1980) and of Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, and Wisenbaker (1979).

How the United States is Changing

Helping students to become effective citizens in today's world is a tremendous challenge because of the enormous changes occurring in our national and global societies. Futurists agree that we are living in a world characterized by rapid and tremendous changes. These unprecedented changes are neither temporary nor fleeting but are signs that we are entering a new age in which many of our traditional values, assumptions, and behaviors will be challenged. New issues will arise, related to such developments as the eroding ozone layer of the atmosphere, biogenetic engineering, the nuclear challenge, the aging of the population, and social-class, racial, and ethnic diversity (Banks, 1991a).

Futurists use different words to describe the emerging world society. Toffler (1980) calls it the *third wave society*. Naisbitt (1982) refers to it as the *information society*. These writers agree, however, that the emerging world society will differ dramatically from the industrial age that dominated Western democracies during the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. While the industrial age was characterized by the production of goods, the

post-industrial society will be increasingly characterized by services and the production of knowledge. Bell (1976) believes that a knowledge or information class will emerge.

The post-industrial society will also be characterized by global rather than national economies, international problems that will require global rather than national solutions, and diversity in lifestyles, values, beliefs, cultures, and political sentiments. Toffler writes, "...we begin to glimpse a new kind of social order -- no longer a mass society, but a high-change, high-diversity, de-massified civilization" (1982, p. 35). Toffler believes that almost everyone will be a member of some kind of minority group in the post-industrial society, whether cultural, social, religious, or political.

Workers in the 21st century must have the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to compete in a global economy that is primarily oriented toward services and knowledge. All of the new jobs and most of the new wealth created between now and the turn of the century will be in service industries (Johnston and Packer, 1987). As we enter the 21st century, if current trends continue, there will be a mismatch between the knowledge and skills demanded of the workforce and the knowledge and skills held by a large share of U.S. workers. A significant percentage of these workers will be people of color. Between 1980 and 2000, about 83% of the new entrants to the labor force will be women, people of color, or immigrants; only 15% will be native White males (Johnston and Packer, 1987). By 2020, about 46% of the nation's youth (ages 0-17) will be young people of color (Pallas, Natriello, and McDill, 1989).

As we enter the 21st century, knowledge-oriented service jobs, in fields such as education and health, will require high-level reasoning, analytical, quantitative, and communication skills. Most corporations in the next century, like many today, will have a transnational identity and will be able to find skilled workers to complete required jobs all over the world, not just in the United States.

In a segment of the PBS series, ***Learning in America***, it was revealed that a New York insurance company was sending paperwork by plane to Dublin at regular intervals to be done by workers there because the company regarded these workers as more competent than comparable workers in the United States. This was happening at the same time that the unemployment rate among African American and Latino teenagers was as high as 30% to 40% in some inner-city communities.

This incident foreshadows a trend that is likely to escalate in the future and poses serious problems. As we move into the 21st century, there will be an increasing need for highly skilled and technical workers in the United States and throughout the world. Yet, if current levels of educational attainments among various social-class and ethnic groups within the United States continue, the nation will be hard pressed to meet its labor needs with its own citizens. Among Latinos, the high school dropout rate is 40%, triple the national average. According to Richman, "The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that jobs requiring a college degree will rise from 22% of the total to 30% by the end of the century.

However, the college enrollment among black youth declined 7% in the past decade" (1990, p. 74).

A few writers are seriously proposing that the nation increase immigration from Asia in order to meet the projected skilled labor needs in the 21st century. Simon, writing in ***The Public Interest***, argues that, "...the best way for the U.S. to boost its rate of technological advance, and to raise its standard of living, is simply to take in more immigrants" (1991, p. 103).

Poverty

The gap between the relatively affluent 85% of U.S. society and the desperately poor 15% continues to widen ("An American Vision...," 1990). Ten percent of Whites or about 21.4 million were living below the poverty level in 1987 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989). Whites are the single largest group living in poverty in terms of numbers. The White poor is also the most voiceless and invisible because they don't have nationally visible spokespersons.

An increasing percentage of the nation's school-age youth are victims of poverty as well as confinement and isolation in low-income, inner-city communities. About one of every five children in the United States lives in poverty (Ford Foundation, 1989, p. 10). The proportion of children living in poverty is expected to increase in the years ahead, from about 21% of all children in 1984 to 27% in 2020 (Pallas, Natriello, and McDill, 1989). The large number of American youths who are victims of poverty poses a serious problem for the nation's schools. Teachers with whom I have talked have described an increased social-class schism within classrooms and schools.

Youths who are victims of poverty are at a high risk of becoming school dropouts, experiencing academic failure, and engaging in antisocial behavior. It is very difficult for youths who drop out of school or who experience academic failure to become effective and productive citizens in a post-industrial, knowledge-based society. Marian Wright Edelman, in her Stanford University commencement address, described some of the major problems that face the nation and, consequently, educators trying to create multicultural, learner-centered schools:

> Every 8 seconds of the school day, an American child drops out. Every 26 seconds an American child runs away from home. Every 47 seconds, an American child is abused and neglected...Every 7 minutes an American child is arrested for a drug offense. Every 30 minutes, an American child is arrested for drunken driving. And every 53 minutes in our rich land, an American child dies from poverty. It's disgraceful that children are the poorest Americans (1990, pp. 9, 20).

Restructuring Schools

The demographic and social trends just described demand that a major goal of education be to help low-income students and students from diverse cultures develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to participate in the mainstream workforce and in the mainstream society in the 21st century. This goal can only be attained by restructuring schools so that they are learner-centered and multicultural with transformative goals and ideals. We must also rethink the goals of our society and nation-state if we are to enter the 21st century as a strong, democratic, and just society.

Our schools, as they are currently structured, conceptualized, and organized, will be unable to help most students, especially low-income students and students of color, to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in the 21st century. Our schools were designed for a different population at a time when immigrant and low-income youths did not need to be literate or have basic skills to get jobs and to become self-supporting citizens. When large numbers of immigrants entered the United States at the turn of the century, jobs in heavy industry were available that required little knowledge or skills. Thus, the school was less important as a job preparatory institution.

To help our future citizens become effective and productive citizens in the next century, our schools must be restructured. *By restructuring I mean a fundamental reexamination and reconstruction of the goals, values, and purposes of schools.* When restructuring occurs, the total system is recognized as the problem and is the target of school reform. Incremental and piecemeal changes are viewed as insufficient.

To restructure schools, we need visionary teachers and educational leaders who are transformative in orientation. In his influential book, ***Leadership*** (1978), Burns identifies two types of leaders, *transformative* and *transactional*. Transformative leaders have a vision that they use to mobilize people to action. In contrast, transactional leadership is *quid pro quo*: "If you scratch my back, I will scratch yours." Transactional leadership, which is widespread within our educational institutions and in the larger society, does not motivate people to act. To respond to the demographic and economic imperatives that I described earlier, we need leaders and teachers who have a vision of the future and who have the skills and abilities to communicate it to their students. The ***Bible*** says somewhere that where there is no vision, the people perish.

Curriculum Restructuring

It is not possible in this brief paper to discuss each aspect of schools that must be reformed in order to create multicultural, learner-centered schools that will improve the life chances of students from diverse groups. Essential changes include helping students who have experienced repeated failures to believe that they can succeed, implementing strategies

that will help teachers to become renewed and revitalized, and implementing a school-based management model in which teachers, administrators, and parents jointly participate in making important decisions about the school. Comer (1980) has created a successful collaborative model for involving teachers, administrators, parents, and school support staff in making key decisions that affect the life of the school.

As a curriculum specialist and theorist, I would like to describe three major goals that provide a vision for restructuring schools to make them multicultural and learner-centered. *We should help students, and their teachers, to know, to care, and to act.* If students and teachers have adequate knowledge, care about people and social issues, and act to help improve our society, I believe that our schools will become multicultural and learner-centered. They will then respond creatively to the changing national and world society I have described.

Knowledge

To acquire the knowledge needed to become effective citizens in the 21st century, students must understand knowledge as a social construction; be able to view concepts, events, and situations from diverse ethnic and gender perspectives; and be able to participate in the construction of knowledge themselves (Banks, 1988; Banks, 1991a). This conception of knowledge differs substantially from that of several popular and influential writers, such as Hirsch (1987) and Ravitch and Finn (1987). Hirsch writes as if knowledge is neutral and static. His book contains a list of important facts that he believes students should master in order to become culturally literate. Knowledge is dynamic, changing, and constructed within a social context rather than neutral and static as Hirsch implies (Banks, 1991b). Consequently, *multicultural literacy* is a more apt phrase to describe the knowledge goal of schools in a multicultural society. Multicultural literacy suggests that a diverse group of people -- not just an elite group -- participates in formulating the knowledge that becomes a part of the school, college, and university curriculum.

Hirsch recommends transmitting knowledge in a largely uncritical way. When we help students to attain knowledge, we should help them to recognize that knowledge reflects the social context in which it is created and that it has normative and value assumptions. Knowledge is a social construction that reflects the experiences of people within the social, economic, and political structures of society (Code, 1991; Harding, 1991).

Elementary and secondary school students, as well as teacher education students, should become sensitive to both the strengths and limitations of knowledge. Mannheim (1936), in ***Ideology and Utopia***, describes two major types of knowledge. He calls knowledge that reflects the point of view of the elites or those at the top of society *ideology*. He uses *utopia* to describe knowledge that reflects the perspectives and experiences of people at the lower rungs of society. A multicultural, learner-centered education should help students to view knowledge from the perspectives of both the top and the bottom.

There are various kinds of knowledge and paradigms, as Kuhn (1970) points out in his book, ***The Structure of Scientific Revolutions***. Some knowledge and paradigms challenge the current social structure and support the reform of institutions; other knowledge and paradigms reinforce the prevailing social-class structure and institutional arrangement within society. Kuhn also describes how difficult it is for new knowledge systems or paradigms to challenge or replace existing ones. When this takes place, Kuhn states that a scientific revolution has occurred.

Students should be taught the extent to which facts, concepts, theories, and paradigms are social constructions. Much of the knowledge institutionalized within the school, college, and university curriculum reinforces and perpetuates the prevailing class, racial, and gender structures in society. The school curriculum should enable students to view facts, events, concepts, and theories from different gender, ethnic, and cultural points of view. This should be done for two reasons: (1) only by looking at concepts, events, and situations from diverse perspectives will students understand the complexity of the U.S. experience; and (2) students are more likely to increase their thinking skills and to develop empathy for outside groups when they are taught to view events, concepts, and situations from diverse points of view.

I agree with Hirsch (1987) that there is a need for all U.S. citizens to master a common core of knowledge. An important question, however, is: Who will participate in the formulation of that knowledge and whose interests will it serve? We need a broad level of participation in the identification, construction, and formulation of this knowledge. We need to deconstruct the idea that the knowledge institutionalized within schools, colleges, and universities is objective and neutral and to help students understand that all knowledge reflects human interests and has both objective and subjective aspects (Code, 1991; Habermas, 1971). Only when this occurs will teachers be able to create and implement a curriculum that is consistent with authentic multicultural, learner-centered schools.

School knowledge should reflect cultural democracy and serve the needs of all of the people. It should contribute to public virtue and the public good. We need public knowledge that liberates rather than limits. Such knowledge should not serve the needs of elite groups within society, as much school and university knowledge does today. Rather, school knowledge should reflect the experiences of all the nation's citizens, and it should empower all people to participate effectively in a democratic society. As Madison argued in the Federalist papers, if there is no civic virtue, then no form of government will render us secure.

The Transformative Curriculum

A curriculum designed to help students understand that knowledge is socially constructed must be *transformative* in nature. The transformative curriculum helps students to reconceptualize and rethink the human experience in both the United States and the world;

to view the human experience from the perspectives of a range of cultural, ethnic, and social-class groups; and to construct their own versions of the past, present, and future. In the transformative curriculum, multiple voices are heard and legitimized: the voices of textbook, literary, and historical writers; the voices of teachers; and the voices of students. After listening to and reflecting on the multiple and diverse voices in the transformative classroom, students can construct their own interpretations of the past, present, and future.

An Example of a Transformative Lesson: In a lesson I developed for a U.S. history textbook entitled "Christopher Columbus and the Arawak Indians" (Banks with Sebesta, 1982), the students are presented with an excerpt from Columbus' diary that describes his arrival in an Arawak community in the Caribbean in 1492. These are among the statements that Columbus wrote about the Arawaks (Jan, 1930):

> They took all and gave all, such as they had, with good will, but it seemed to be that they were a people very lacking in everything. They all go naked as their mothers bore them, and the women also...They should be good servants and quick to learn, since I see that they very soon say all that is said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, for it appeared to me that they had no religious beliefs. Our Lord willing, at the time of my departure, I will bring back six of them to Your Highness, that they may learn to talk. I saw no beast of any kind, except parrots.

The students are then encouraged to view Columbus' statements from the perspective of the Arawaks. The Arawaks had an oral culture and consequently left no written records. Archaeologist Fred Olsen studied Arawak artifacts and used what he learned from them to construct a day in the life of the Arawaks, which he describes in his book, ***On the Trail of the Arawaks*** (Olsen, 1974). The students are asked to read an excerpt from Olsen's account of a day in the life of the Arawaks and to respond to these questions:

> Columbus wrote in his diary that he thought the Arawaks had no religious beliefs. You read about Arawak life in the report by Fred Olsen. Do you think Columbus was correct? Why?

Teaching Students to Care

In his commencement address at Antioch College in 1859, Horace Mann told the graduating students, "Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity" (Beck, 1980, p. 480). Because of the widening gap between the rich and the poor in our nation, we need to teach our students to care, as well as to know, if we are going to create a just and humane society. We should help our students become caring about people and their problems. A recent survey indicates that materialism, rather than caring, is a major value among youth today. This survey indicated that many young men and women now consider it extremely important or quite important to have at least two cars, the latest clothes, a high

quality stereo, and a vacation home (Otten, 1990). The 25th annual survey of college freshmen, conducted by the American Council on Education and the University of California, contains more hopeful data about the social attitudes of young people ("Student Activism...," 1991). It indicates that young people today care more about social problems and issues than their peers several years ago. A significant percentage of the students (79.4%) believe that racial discrimination is still a major problem in the nation.

It is much easier to talk about the need to help students to develop caring than to conceptualize and implement ways to help students care more about their fellow human beings. My own research (Banks, 1984), as well as research summarized by Kohn (1991) in "Caring Kids: The Role of the School," indicates that students have great potential for caring and that we need to create environments that nurture and reinforce caring responses and predispositions. These environments must be cooperative rather than competitive. They must also reinforce personal efficacy and empowerment. Research indicates that students must feel good about themselves and have a positive self-identity in order to develop empathy and caring for others, especially for people from other racial, ethnic, and cultural groups (Banks, 1991c).

Research on African American Suburban Youths: They Can Care

In my study of 98 elementary and high school African American youths (mean age of 12.2 years) who lived in the predominantly White suburban communities of Seattle, I examined a number of variables related to identity and acceptance of outgroups (Banks, 1984). I interpreted some of the results of this study within my conceptual framework of the stages of cultural development typology (Banks, 1988). (See Table 1.)

Stage 1 individuals have negative beliefs and attitudes toward their own ethnic or cultural group and have internalized the negative images of themselves perpetuated by the larger society. My theory suggests that people in this stage are unable to develop caring and positive attitudes toward outgroups. *I hypothesize that self-acceptance and self-clarification are prerequisites for developing caring and acceptance of outgroups.* The youth in this study had very positive attitudes toward African Americans; consequently, my theory suggests that they were psychologically able to accept and respond positively to outgroups. Over 90% of them agreed with the statement, "I like the way I look"; 98% agreed with the statement, "I like the color of my skin." Most of the students not only had positive personal identities; they also had positive attitudes toward African Americans as a group. These two attitudes are not always correlated positively (Cross, 1991). The students evidenced positive racial attitudes toward Blacks as a group as measured by the Stephan-Rosenfield (1979) racial attitude scale.

Stage 2 is characterized by ethnic/cultural encapsulation and ethnic exclusiveness, including voluntary separatism. Individuals within this stage tend to evaluate their ethnic group more positively than outside ethnic groups. Most of the students in my study had

highly positive attitudes toward Whites as well as African Americans. They scored very low on ethnocentrism measures.

At stage 3, the individual is able to clarify his/her ethnic identity and to develop positive and clarified attitudes toward his/her ethnic/cultural group. At stage 4, the individual has a healthy ethnic/cultural identity, has positive attitudes toward another ethnic/cultural group, and is able to participate successfully in his/her own group as well as in another group.

In this study, the data indicated that most of the students met the criteria for both stage 3 and stage 4. Their responses to a number of the items in the questionnaire indicated that they had positive racial attitudes toward African Americans and Whites, that they enjoyed interacting with both Black and White friends, and that they wished that more African American students and teachers were in their environments.

This study indicated that this sample of African American youths had positive attitudes toward the outgroup (Whites) within their schools and communities, as well as positive attitudes toward themselves and other African Americans. Most of the students in this study can be characterized both as stage 3 (ethnically clarified) and stage 4 (bicultural) individuals. While these two stages are conceptually distinct, in reality individuals are likely to retain stage 3 (ethnic clarification) characteristics as they function biculturally (stage 4).

The findings of this study suggest that students need to accept their own personal and racial identity and to feel good about who they are before they can develop caring for outside individuals and groups. The African American students in this study liked themselves and their own racial groups as well as their White friends. These findings indicate that teachers can build upon this positiveness within students to help them become more caring and compassionate human beings. Kohn (1991) also makes this point in his *Kappan* article.

Personal, Social, and Civic Action

An important idea in Dante is that the worst place in hell is reserved for those who in times of great moral crisis take a neutral stand (Dante, 1948). Martin Luther King, Jr. stated, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" (King, 1987). Both of these quotes suggest the need for multicultural, learner-centered schools to develop citizens who not only know and care, but also are willing to act and know how to act effectively.

Action in the school curriculum should be conceptualized broadly rather than narrowly. Action may be personal, social, or civic. A significant personal action after a student has studied a unit on the environment may be to make a personal commitment to ask for a paper rather than a plastic bag when shopping for groceries. Another student may decide to go see the film ***Dances with Wolves*** after studying about American Indians and the settlement of the West. Another student may decide to stop telling sexist jokes after a unit

on gender equity.

Participation gives students a greater sense of personal, social, and civic efficacy. Knowledge is of little value if it is not used to help solve human problems or to influence the human condition. Traditionally, the school curriculum has educated students for civic apathy rather than for efficacy and action. Students should participate in citizen action activities only after they have studied the related issue from an interdisciplinary perspective; analyzed and clarified their values regarding it; identified the possible consequences of their actions; and expressed a willingness to accept those consequences (Banks, with Clegg, 1990). Lewis (1991) has written a helpful guide for developing social action projects and activities.

Conclusion

In teaching students to know, to care, and to act, we will also teach them to think critically about their communities, their nation, and the world. James Baldwin, one of the great writers of this century, in an extemporaneous speech to a group of teachers in New York City, stated eloquently what the goals of education should be in multicultural, learner-centered schools. This classic speech is called "A Talk to Teachers," and is reprinted in his last collection of essays, ***The Price of the Ticket*** (1985, p. 326). He said:

> The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself or herself, to make his own decisions, to say to himself this is black or this is white, to decide for himself whether there is a God in heaven or not. To ask questions of the universe, and then to live with those questions, is the way he achieves his identity. But no society is really anxious to have that kind of person around. What society really, ideally, wants is a citizenry that will simply obey the rules of society. If a society succeeds in this, that society is about to perish.

TABLE 1

The Stages of Cultural/Ethnic Development: A Typology [1]

Stage 1 Cultural Psychological Captivity

During this stage, the individual has internalized the negative ideologies and beliefs about his or her ethnic or cultural group that are institutionalized within the society. Consequently, the stage 1 person exemplifies ethnic self-rejection and low self-esteem.

Stage 2 Cultural Encapsulation

Stage 2 is characterized by ethnic encapsulation and ethnic exclusiveness, including voluntary separatism. The individual participates primarily within his or her own cultural or ethnic community and believes that his or her ethnic group is superior to that of others.

Stage 3 Cultural Identity Clarification

At this stage, the individual is able to clarify personal attitudes and ethnic identity, reduce intrapsychic conflict, and develop positive attitudes toward his or her ethnic group. The individual learns to accept self, thus developing the characteristics needed to accept and respond more positively to outside cultural and ethnic groups.

Stage 4 Biculturalism

Individuals within this stage have a healthy sense of ethnic identity and the psychological characteristics and skills needed to participate in their own ethnic culture, as well as within another ethnic culture.

Stage 5 Multiculturalism

Stage 5 describes the idealized goal for citizenship identity within a culturally pluralistic nation. The individual within this stage is able to function, at least at minimal levels, within several ethnic sociocultural environments and to understand, appreciate, and share the values, symbols, and institutions of several ethnic cultures. The individual is also motivated to function within several different cultural communities.

Stage 6 Globalism and Global Competency

Individuals within stage 6 have clarified, reflective, and positive ethnic, national, and global identifications. They also have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function in ethnic cultures within their own nation as well as in cultures within other nations. These individuals have the ideal delicate balance of ethnic, national, and global identifications, commitments, literacy, and behaviors. They have internalized the universalistic ethical values and principles of humankind and have the skills, competencies, and commitments needed to act on these values.

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[1] Based on material in James A. Banks (1988). ***Multiethnic Education: Theory and Practice***, 2nd edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. Reprinted with permission.

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Building Learner-Centered Schools: Developing Professional Capacity, Policy, and Political Consensus

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Learner-centered schools focus on students' needs, interests, and talents as the basis for organizing schoolwork and school organization, building curriculum and learning opportunities, and developing relationships between and among students, educators, and parents. Such schools are, by definition, grounded in an appreciation and deep valuing of human diversity. They are rooted in our diverse human experiences, and they open up the infinite reaches of human possibility. Centering schools on learners influences how we think about curriculum and its connections to students' experience, culture, and personal meaning; how we think about assessment and its capacity to illuminate the full range of students' multiple intelligences and achievements; how we think about teaching and its responsiveness to students' conceptions and understandings. It also influences how we think about school governance and its appreciation for multiple perspectives, and how we think about school organization and its capacity to promote deep human connections and a collaborative spirit.

In this conference, we have already talked a great deal about making these kinds of changes happen in our schools and our communities. Today, I'd like to talk about what we need to do to make these changes last.

As you know, efforts to create learner-centered schools are not new. In the early 1900s, when John Dewey was talking about a new educational age, he very optimistically proclaimed that the old education, with its passive assemblage and mass assembly line education of students, was being replaced by a new education involving a "Copernican shift" in our view of schools. This shift was one in which all the "appliances of education would revolve around the needs of the child." During this time, a great many schools created wonderful environments within which the multiple talents and experiences of children could be addressed.

This movement toward a "new education," however, flourished briefly and then receded for some time. It was reborn in the 1930s when progressive educators launched a massive school reform. New ideas had surfaced when the Great Depression set in, and people began to question the Efficiency Movement and the assembly line orientation that had dominated business and schools during the 1920s. The Progressive Education Association's ***Eight Year Study*** was a culmination of many efforts in that decade to create schools that focused on student learning in new and exciting ways.

During this time, over 300 colleges and universities agreed to accept students from 30 experimental high schools without regard to test scores, Carnegie units, or a variety of other constraints. These institutions of higher education decided to admit students based on the evidence of their actual learning as shown by their own work and their teachers' recommendations. A carefully designed study was conducted in which 1450 students from the experimental schools and the same number from other nonexperimental schools were matched according to socioeconomic status, gender, race, and measured achievement levels and were followed for eight years.

The ***Eight Year Study***, as this came to be called, found that, on a wide range of criteria, the students from these experimental schools outperformed the students from the traditional schools in colleges and universities from Harvard and Princeton to land-grant colleges across the country. The differences between the two groups of students held for all kinds of student outcomes measured in a wide variety of ways across such dimensions as civic and social responsibility, academic achievement, leadership, life competencies or coping skills, and the ability to engage in creative thought and action.

One would think that the case for progressive education had been proved and the issue opened and closed. But this kind of education virtually disappeared once again during the war years and the 1950s. It was reborn in the 1960s, with the arrival of child-centered reforms that were linked to many of the social agendas of the time. Many of us experienced, either as students or as educators, such "new" initiatives as open education, interdisciplinary curriculum, multicultural education, differentiated staffing, team teaching, and democratic decision making, all of which reappeared in the 1960s, having previously characterized the efforts of progressives at the turn of the century and in the 1930s.

These efforts, too, were scaled back and held in check by the back-to-basics movement of the 1970s and 1980s. And now, here we are again, encountering -- and actualizing -- many of the same kinds of ideas as we try to restructure schools to meet the needs of learners rather than the demands of bureaucracies. But I think our efforts are occurring under changed circumstances that may, in fact, propel these ideas further and allow them to reach farther than was the case in earlier eras. The increased importance of an education that succeeds for all children -- that goes beyond "delivering instruction" to actually creating the conditions for learning -- is obvious at this moment in history. That the survival and prosperity of our society depends on a massive rethinking of schools so that they serve all students well is now widely acknowledged. There are still many obstacles to overcome, however.

Throughout this century, each flourish of child-centered education was followed by a return to standardization and bureaucratization: to top-down efforts bent on forcing teachers to teach a predetermined set of facts. Those predetermined facts, as Jim Banks has so eloquently explained, have generally derived from a very limited canon, delivered in a controlled and controlling fashion that is bent on forcing children to learn them in just that way. The efficiency movement of the 1920s, the behavioristic teacher-proof curricula of the 1950s, and the back-to-basics movement of the late 1970s and 1980s all placed a heavy emphasis on teachers' compliance with regulatory directives and on students' compliance with their teachers' directives. They enforced passivity in teaching and learning, rather than encouraging critical thinking, reflection, or invention.

We have to take seriously the question of why the earlier progressive reforms failed to last or to spread. We need to understand what happened and what we must do differently if what we are talking about today is going to propel us toward something other than another

decade of increased standardization, bureaucratization, and compliance-oriented education. If we do not find ways to preserve and strengthen the initiatives now being undertaken, we will see a return to the kind of education that is based on a narrow canon articulated through a predetermined set of facts to be learned. This view was recently exemplified in E.D. Hirsch's book, ***Cultural Literacy***, which was followed by a variety of other volumes waiting to be turned into the next era of standardized curriculum.

Those earlier waves of reform were, in fact, as widespread as anything we have seen yet in this round of change. They were written about and enthusiatically embraced by many people. And they were defended by research: their success was demonstrated with the evidence offered by compelling, carefully controlled studies. What happened to them? Well, for those of us who lived through at least one round of educational reforms and counter-reforms, it became clear that the changes were never deeply rooted in the professional structure of our schools, in the policy structure of the schools, or in the political structure of this country. As one set of change-agent teachers and administrators moved on or retired, often those who took their places were not imbued with the same sets of ideas, nor were there encouragements from the political environment to support these kinds of schools.

In each of these eras, those schools that were able to really focus on the needs of students were more comfortable existing at the periphery of the system, in alternative school networks, rather than at the core, because to engage in child-centered education in a serious way means having to change the normal policy structure within which schools live. Even today, child-centered schools find that they must request waivers from this or that restriction or requirement, whether at the local level, from local board policies or union contracts; the state level, from a variety of curriculum and staffing regulations; or from various federal regulations that constrain the ways in which programs can be offered. This movement cannot succeed over the long haul if it exists only on waivers that can be taken away as easily as they were granted. (And they are not so easily granted, as many of us know!)

If we want to achieve lasting change, there are three components of a foundation for a new form of schooling that we must build. First, we must build a strong foundation for professional development before and throughout the careers of teachers. Second, we must pay attention to supportive policy development. And third, we must deal with political development -- the development of consensus about the kind of education we as parents, communities, and a society want for all -- not just some -- of our children.

Professional Development

Of course, professional development is a basic requirement for any kind of reform. It is impossible to make change without finding ways to share knowledge among those engaged in the change. But continuous professional development, deeply rooted in the life of schools

and the norms of teaching, is even more essential for the type of education we are talking about, because an understanding of students, their learning, and their needs cannot be created by fiat or mandate. Yesterday, Deborah Meier gave the example of a teacher who wanted to know if she should "do open" (i.e., use open education methods) on the day when she was being observed by a supervisor. I think that is a very good example of how reform ideas can become trivialized and lose their power and meaning -- for teachers and students -- in the absence of reflective and empowering forms of professional development.

If we believe in and understand a constructivist view of knowledge, if we understand that students create their own intellectual frameworks based on their particular experiences, cultures, communities, and families, then we know that understandings are never "delivered." We don't "deliver" understandings in the way that some schools talk about "delivering instruction." Understandings are created anew within each person and between unique individuals. They are always transformed in that creative process. This is, of course, also true for adults, including teachers and staff in schools and universities, who must have opportunities as well to construct their understandings of what it means to practice in a way that attends, respectfully yet purposefully, to the needs, interests, and development of learners.

All of us must invent our own understandings of learner-centered schools. One of the most interesting findings in the ***Eight Year Study*** I mentioned earlier was that, even among the experimental schools, it was the *degree* of experimentation, not the *kind* of experiment undertaken, that made the difference in schools' effectiveness. It was the *extent* to which schools were willing to come together to work as a community on their own innovations that predicted the best results for students. The students who most impressively outstripped their comparison group peers were the students who came from the schools that engaged most deeply in the process of creating new understandings among the people there: where the community, the parents, and the teachers worked together and struggled with the question, "What kind of education do we want for our children?" And "What does this kind of education mean for us in what we do?"

In contrast, schools that adopted a handy little packaged reform that they had seen somewhere did not produce the best outcomes for their students. So it turns out that the process is at least as important as the content of any particular change. That means we have to find ways to engage people in the process of learning and creating practices and possibilities for themselves. We can't do this without changing the confines of the traditional school day, where teachers find themselves on an assembly line teaching five or six batches of 30 students each period throughout each day. In this model for structuring schoolwork, any other time that teachers might use for consulting with each other, working with parents or individual students, planning or building curricula, is considered "released time," not part of the act of teaching.

Schools that are engaged in creating learner-centered environments must, as a first step, find ways for the members of their communities -- their staffs, students, and parents --

to have time within the structure of the school day to work together on that invention process. The process of collectively constructing new possibilities for schooling is itself a key element of professional development. The schools that have redesigned their schedules to make time available for collegial planning are finding it much easier to make progress than the schools that are trying to fit the process of change in around the edges of the traditional schedule.

Of course, creating what Peter Senge calls "learning organizations" (Senge, 1990) will demand many other changes in the ways we structure schooling. We must develop strategies for professional development within schools that move beyond the traditional inservice training -- an activity that sounds like, and often feels like, teachers at a gas station getting pumped up with ideas. We need sustained, continuous professional development opportunities based on teachers' and schools' individual needs and interests built into the daily fabric of teaching work. We need to build collegial time into our schools: time for planning, consultation, and learning.

We need to make the case with political officials and budget managers that investments in teacher knowledge and development are the most important investments we can make in the future of our schools. American public schools spend one-half of one percent of their budgets on staff development for teachers, while corporations spend eight to ten percent of their revenues on employee education and training programs. Most schools in Europe and Asia structure teaching so that half or more of a teacher's time is spent outside the classroom in planning, curriculum building, consultation, and learning activities. Though total expenditures are about the same, the difference in how funds are spent -- on teachers and their knowledge rather than on elongated hierarchies of supervisors and inspectors -- makes all the difference in what students ultimately have the opportunity to learn.

In addition to helping teachers find time and resources with which to work and learn together, we must also attend to the learning and participation of parents, who are very important actors in school restructuring, particularly where shared decision making is a goal. If staffs and parents together are to make sound decisions on behalf of students, rather than being relegated to receiving directives from distant bureaucratic offices, they must have access to the kinds of knowledge that will help to inform their thinking and decision making. Making learner-centered decisions, furthermore, requires extensive collaboration and consultation between parents and teachers, along with other school staff, so that shared understandings about individual children can inform what schools and parents do.

Obviously, we need resources for all of these kinds of learning. New York City, like many other districts across the country, is currently in danger of losing the resources that have been available for helping schools, teachers, and parents learn about school change. The Teacher Centers Consortium's efforts to provide facilitators to schools, for example, have been so successful that their model has been taken up by the Board of Education. In those schools that have connections to facilitators and other learning resources, tremendous strides in school development are being made. Yet funding for these efforts is in serious

jeopardy. Networks of schools, such as the Center for Collaborative Education here in New York, and a variety of other strategies by which schools are coming together to share and disseminate information, are also absolutely critical.

If the next generation of teachers is to be prepared for learner-centered teaching, schools of education will have to be part of the change, not only in terms of what they teach, but how they teach as well. We need to infuse the kind of content in teacher education that would allow for teaching that is responsive to students, which means much more emphasis on learning and development and a lot less emphasis on packaged techniques. In fact, we will need to eliminate the concept that packaged techniques, rather than sophisticated understandings of subjects and students that allow for complex decision making, are at the heart of teacher knowledge.

Major changes in how teacher education is conducted also need to take place: changes that encourage a more reflective orientation for teachers and that prepare them for invention rather than merely for implementation. These changes will need to rely on more coherent and lasting connections between schools and universities that engage prospective and veteran teachers in putting practice into research as well as research into practice.

We need to create professional development school collaborations by which we can move beyond peripheral temporary arrangements between schools and colleges based on the ephemeral interests of a couple of professors and a couple of teachers in the school that can come and go. Instead, we need institutional arrangements by which we can transform the professional development of teachers while they are preparing to teach -- helping them learn the complex art of learner-centered practice in ways that draw on knowledge from both research and experience -- and support the ongoing development of teachers, teacher educators, and the school community on a continuing basis.

Policy Development

That leads me to my second point, which concerns policy development. If we are going to create learner-centered schools that continue into the next century and beyond, we have to pay attention to the policy framework within which all of us do our work. This includes the ways in which teachers, administrators, and other educators are certified and the ways in which teacher education institutions are accredited. It is these and other policies that create the structures determining what new educators will understand and be able to do.

Now, I realize that discussions of such matters as teacher education, licensing, and accreditation are very unpopular and generally viewed as boring. These aspects of schooling are highly regulated and routinized; they seem impermeable to efforts at change. Teacher certification, especially, seems to many to be beyond hope; people in both schools and universities just leave it alone and let the bureaucrats handle it because it is seems so arcane

and difficult to influence.

There is a serious problem here, however, that cannot be avoided if we are going to succeed in our larger quest to teach all students well. At this point in our country, we have certification systems for teachers that nobody believes in: not the members of the profession who went through them; not the members of the university community; not the public; and not policy makers, themselves, who continue to try to find loopholes around them. The public says, "Well, really anybody can teach," and, "Those certification requirements don't really make you a good teacher anyway, so let's avoid them." Policy makers are frequently happy to oblige, especially when shortages of teachers make it difficult to staff schools at the wages and working conditions that are now offered to teachers.

This view, as we are well aware in this city, results in hiring people without preparation to teach -- over 2,000 a year in New York City alone -- and placing them primarily in the schools that serve predominantly African-American, Hispanic-American, and low-income students. Research indicates that such unprepared teachers are much less able than well-prepared teachers to respond to different student needs and learning styles or even to view it as their job to do so. Armed with too little knowledge to serve students effectively, they are more likely to blame the child for not learning than to question and reshape their own practices. The practice of solving shortages and avoiding arcane certification requirements by avoiding them with licensing loopholes perpetuates longstanding inequalities in learning opportunities. These unacknowledged inequalities, then, allow distant critics to say, "We don't understand why *'those'* kids don't achieve."

Those of us who are committed to creating good schools for all children have to take a proactive stance with respect to shaping the professional structure of teaching. Developing meaningful standards for professional certification will have to be part of our agenda if, over the long haul, we want to insure that all children encounter teachers who are not only knowledgeable, but sensitive to their needs, experiences, and multiple approaches to learning. In restructuring our schools, we must become more energized, impassioned, and politically effective about this "boring" issue.

We also need to be engaged in policy development in the areas of curriculum and assessment. In addition to fighting for a multicultural curriculum of inclusion as we discussed earlier this morning, we should work to engender -- in policy and in practice -- a curriculum of caring. A number of schools have begun the practice of having students engage in community service, both within and outside the school. At the Urban Academy, for example, the portfolio students prepare for graduation requires that they demonstrate not only how they have served the community through their community work experiences, but also how they have served their peers and colleagues inside the school. Students grow enormously when they are given the respect and the responsibility of being contributing members of their communities. Our curricula need to respect and acknowledge the importance of this kind of service.

In order to do this, we will have to help policy makers get beyond the notion of curriculum that currently governs most curriculum policy -- that is, the anointing of a particular set of facts that students must be sure to master each year (i.e., cram into their heads to regurgitate on an examination). Many of New York's Regents courses and examinations are particularly salient examples of that view of curriculum, which, unfortunately, works against the creation of a learner-centered school environment -- one in which the goal is to develop habits of mind and habits of heart that encourage students to think, analyze, question, create, and problem solve together.

It is going to take a lot of work to figure out how policies, along with practices, can better support these kinds of learning goals. But this is a moment in history when we have the opportunity to transform policy in support of practice; and members of the profession cannot leave it solely to policy makers to figure out how to do the job for us. We must engage these issues within the profession and within the schools, and we must speak from the grass roots up.

With respect to assessment, the effort to establish more authentic forms of assessment for students in schools will require changes in both state and local testing policies. The new policies will need to support and encourage assessment of student performances aimed at challenging learning goals, without overt prescription of what the content of all of the exercises and tests will be.

I hope that we will adopt an approach to assessment like that in many other countries where assessments are not developed and implemented primarily by external testing agencies. The United States is almost alone in having external agencies determine what it is that students should know, by virtue of their having control of the tests. In most countries, faculties convene to develop and to score the assessments. Teachers are involved in examining both their own students and the students of teachers in other schools. In many cases, the assessment process is internal. It is under the control of the teacher and is directly tied to ongoing instruction. In these ways, the act of assessment improves knowledge and practice and helps to develop shared standards across the educational enterprise as a whole. It is not the sole purpose of such assessment to produce and report two-digit data points to a governmental authority.

New York is, again, one of the states that is very open to the development of more authentic forms of assessment. Within its existing assessment system there are some innovative efforts to engage students in performance-based assessment, where they are allowed to show their capacities on essays and oral examinations and practical performance events, such as the elementary school science assessment. Currently there are many proposals being examined to expand these ideas much further to create a performance-oriented assessment system, in which students will be engaged in planning, implementing, and analyzing scientific experiments, conducting social research projects, and so on.

In our creation of new forms of assessment, we really need to be engaging these

issues both as school-level issues and as policy issues. Otherwise, as schoolpeople retire or move on and as commissioners change, our efforts in the schools will be overrun by an uninformed conception of what it means to teach and to learn.

We also need to develop and enact new conceptions of accountability in our policy system. We need to change those conceptions embedded in laws and regulations from a bureaucratic era that suggest that accountability exists when people follow procedures and fill out forms in triplicate or quadruplicate. In that view, it is apparently believed that you will get more accountability if the forms are in quadruplicate rather than merely triplicate! We need to change this old bureaucratic notion of accountability to one in which we see accountability as the capacity of the people in schools to be responsive and responsible to the needs of their students.

This means taking into account the ways in which schools and school systems hire, evaluate, and support their staffs; how they relate to students and parents; how they manage their affairs and make decisions; how they insure that the best available knowledge will be acquired and used in the school; how they evaluate their own functioning as well as students' progress; how they tackle problems; and how they provide incentives for continual improvement. Our policies should encourage schools to think of accountability and responsiveness in all of these ways. If we want reform to continue, we must build a policy structure to support and maintain it.

Political Development

Finally, we need to be engaged in political development. We need, as educators and those concerned with education, to create the means for speaking with a united voice, though not necessarily a single unified voice. In the current political debate over the new federal role in education, our voices are rarely heard. It probably has not escaped your attention, as it has not escaped mine, that discussion and arguments about how to promote child-centered school reform for critical thinking, creativity, social responsibility, and invention are not seen on the op-ed pages of ***The New York Times***, ***The Washington Post***, ***The Atlantic Monthly***, and other places where opinions are shaped. Those ideas are also not much in evidence in the forums where educational policy is hammered out. Basically, the educational debate, at this moment, is almost entirely outside the reach of the educational community.

If you look at the current manifestation of national educational leadership, the President's plan calls for 500 million dollars of spending for education next year. That is one one-thousandth of the amount that we will have spent on the savings and loan bailout and less than the amount for one day's military activity in the Persian Gulf. While we hear that "dollars do not educate students," we are not hearing much about the fact that federal funds used to make up 12 percent of the educational budget; now they comprise only six percent. Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander talks about that six percent figure as though it is

God-ordained that federal funding should always and forever be six percent of our educational spending! The reduction in federal spending from 12 percent down to six percent came almost exclusively from aid to our cities -- out of the budgets of schools that serve low-income and minority children -- and from programs that were obliterated in 1980. These included the Teacher Corps, aid for school desegregation including magnet schools, and support for model schools and demonstration programs within our cities.

Now the President is talking about creating new model and demonstration schools, not to replace the many successful ones that were recently eliminated or are currently in jeopardy. Instead, these are going to be schools invented and funded by the business community, not by the educational community on behalf of the public.

Much of the financial crisis we are experiencing today in this city, and in most other American cities, is due to federal disinvestment in education and other social services. As federal aid to the states decreased during the last decade, the states' aid to the cities decreased. As federal aid for housing subsidies for low- and moderate-income families decreased by 80 percent, the government created homelessness and then asked the schools, which were already struggling with greater needs and fewer funds, to create new programs for homeless children. The dollars that were sucked out of our cities and out of our schools to support the military buildup of the 1980s are not going to find their way back into the schools unless we find a way to develop politically as well as to develop educationally.

Now I want to talk about what I believe we should do politically. I think we need to evaluate the underlying assumptions of reform proposals and develop a coherent set of proposals that can promote the goals of truly excellent and equal education for all children in all schools.

There are really two theories of educational reform that we are contending with right now, one of which will exacerbate current inequalities along with current discouragements to developing a thinking curriculum in schools, while the other holds some hope for helping schools develop the capacity to serve all students well. The first theory assumes that the problem is lack of effort on the part of schoolpeople and inadequate attention to tests. Its proponents claim, "What we need are more tests coupled with rewards and punishments for schools to motivate better education." You have seen this idea appear in plan after plan.

This theory of reform is the basis of the call for national testing. Unfortunately, the kind of testing called for in President Bush's ***America 2000*** plan is not the kind of authentic assessment we have been talking about here today. The plan calls for tests based on the existing National Assessment of Educational Progress, which is a primarily multiple choice test like most others currently used in schools. Furthermore, the plan anticipates that this National Assessment Test will not only be the basis for the grades on the nation's annual report card, but also for deciding how much federal money schools will receive.

Those schools that want to reach out and educate children with learning disabilities,

or physical and mental handicaps, or children who come into this country not speaking English and need additional help and resources, are going to be penalized for that decision by a theory of educational reform that essentially argues that the real problem with schools is that the people in them are lazy and slothful. In this view, what we need to do to improve the schools, then, is to apply more carrots and more sticks. We need to penalize the schools whose students get lower test scores and provide merit pay for those that get high test scores. If the schools get those test scores by excluding children who are educationally needy, that is no concern of ours.

Unfortunately, as we have learned in districts that have adopted similar "incentives" for schools, the emphasis on average test scores, rather than on the educational well-being of students, leads schools to place lower achieving students in special education, hold them back a grade, or push them out so that their scores won't bring down the average. That kind of irresponsible behavior is the ultimate effect of this theory of educational reform.

There is another theory of educational reform that motivates our efforts here today. The second theory is based on a view that schools are not succeeding in the ways that society now wants them to because they do not have the capacity to do so. Therefore, our work -- and the goal of productive policy -- is to build the base of knowledge available to schools, their capacity to use this knowledge, the connections among teachers and schools that support their learning and development, and their connections to communities so that all schools can be places that parents will want to choose and that students will feel good about attending.

We need, then, to be able to articulate a learning-centered and a learner-centered view of school reform. We need to articulate that view in "Letters to the Editor" and in op-ed pieces. We need to be involved in public education -- that is, the education of the public -- to explain how schools can create education that is student-centered, that is humanistic, that understands the needs of students, and that can help them become active, intelligent, thoughtful, responsible, and inventive citizens. We must be able to articulate a vision and a plan that legitimately justify the investments needed to build our capacity to serve students -- and our society -- well.

We also need to be able to join together in ways that we currently cannot because we do not have a unified profession. We now have an occupation-based structure for our work, which puts teacher educators in one profession, teachers in another profession, and administrators in yet another profession. We are balkanized into a panoply of occupations, which fail to come together as a profession. In education, it is not uncommon to hear people say, "Well, I'm no longer a teacher. Now I'm an administrator." Or, "I'm a supervisor."

In other professions, however, a person does not change professions if he changes jobs. If a lawyer becomes a managing partner in a law firm, for example, it does not mean that she is no longer a lawyer. She still belongs to the American Bar Association; she identifies with her colleagues, and they speak, as professionals, with a unified voice. If a physician becomes a member of a medical commission or a department chair in a hospital,

he is still a doctor, pledged to honor the Hippocratic oath as a member of the medical profession. Professionals continue to uphold the common views and commitments of their profession and to act in a unified fashion with respect to those professional views and commitments.

As educators, we need to eliminate the divisions we have created by identifying ourselves with the unions we belong to and with the parts of the occupation in which we do our work. We are all doing the same work. We must begin to find ways to unite as a profession and to unite with the communities and the parents we serve. Ours cannot be a profession that distances us further from those we serve. We cannot proceed without a publicly connected conception of a unified educational community wherein each one of us takes responsibility for reaching beyond the divisiveness within our ranks and pressing for a unified and a politically responsible profession.

I would like to close this morning with these words of Horace Mann since we are sitting in his auditorium today. They are from a talk he gave during one of those previous eras of reform, actually in the mid-1800s. "Where anything is growing," he said, "one former is worth a thousand reformers." I think, in this room and across the country, we are fortunate that many thousands of us have found ways to join together to form the schools that will serve a learner-centered society. Let us be inspired to return to and continue this very difficult and very important work with our hearts and with our hands connected.

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Restructuring and Possibility

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Appearing at the end of a conference rich in ideas for transforming classrooms and restructuring schools, I want in one way to celebrate and in another way to summarize what has been said. I am not sure I can suggest next steps, because that is up to the participants in this meeting. I do have a desire, however, to pose some of the queer questions philosophers are supposed to pose, to stir the waters a bit more, to find something to say that will keep you all uneasy and awake as you leave these halls. I suppose I want to remind you (if you need reminding) that it is at least unwise to believe that God is in His Heaven and all is right with the world.

I think of Hannah Arendt, making the point that action (in contrast to behavior) always means taking an initiative, beginning, setting something in motion. And a beginning is not just the beginning of something, but of somebody -- a beginner herself or himself. Then (and I cannot resist this when I ponder what it can mean to center on the learner) Arendt wrote, "It is in the nature of beginning that something new is started which cannot be expected from whatever may have happened before. This character of startling unexpectedness is inherent in all beginning..." (Arendt, 1958, pp. 177-178). Taking that seriously when it comes to teaching, I like to talk about moving from the predictable to the possible. I like to summon up that capacity called imagination to remind myself that experience always holds more than can be predicted. This is the case with regard to the experience of learners (if those learners are thought of as situated in the concreteness of things) and certainly in the experience of teachers. Eliot Wigginton's research projects, Jim Banks' explorations of multiculturalism, Lucy Calkins' writing projects: all these, and the other things we have witnessed at this conference, have reminded us of what openings can mean, of how many things become possible if we reach beyond where we are.

I find analogues for this in what happens when I read new books, see paintings I have not seen before, discover new films. I find them often when I reread something, as I do when I teach novels in my classes (Kate Chopin's ***The Awakening***, for example, or Don Delillo's ***White Noise***, or Toni Morrison's ***The Bluest Eye***), when I revisit a Cezanne still life, Picasso's portrait of Gertrude Stein, Romare Bearden's view of Harlem roof tops, Edward Hopper's "House by the Railroad," Georgia O'Keeffe's stone and clay and receding landscapes -- taking the eye we can never tell where. I need to remind you that we are truly never finished as we live, that our identities and our projects always lie ahead of us (as our students' lie ahead of them), that there is always, always more.

We only come to realize this, of course, when we make deliberate efforts to stave off routines. John Dewey warned against the kind of automatic life that keeps people from developing a sense of what life is about or where it is going. Today we are likely to use the word "reflectiveness," to hold in our minds' eyes Donald Schon's vision of the "reflective practitioner" (Schon, 1983) with the same notion of awareness and openness to the world. But Dewey reminded us strongly of the power of the anaesthetic, the humdrum, the "submission to convention" (Dewey, 1934, p. 40), he said, in both practice and intellectual procedure. Much like Virginia Woolf, who wrote of entanglement in the cotton wool of

daily life and of the need for "shocks of awareness" for the sake of attaining "moments of being" (Woolf, 1976, p. 70), Dewey knew the dangers of repetitiveness, boredom, and banality.

A concern for attentiveness, for aliveness, for care underlay his interest in the centrality of the arts in experience *and* his interest in children's coming to be by means of active learning. And he ordinarily had in mind their framing questions that were significant for them, posing meaningful problems, trying to make sense of the actualities of their lives. All these ideas -- wide-awakeness, beginnings, the unexpected, and the vibrant life of the mind -- keep feeding into my own excitement about teaching. They have to do with *why* I teach, or try to teach: to excite others, to provoke them to reach out, to learn to learn. And I am sure that is the case with most of you, once you are released from convention, fixities, and top-down prescriptions. I am sure it is true of most people once they are freed to be persons, to be themselves rather than clerks or functionaries or the alienated objects of bureaucratic controls.

It is as persons in action, moving together with our students, choosing ourselves as participants in learning communities, that we become participants as well in the tradition we have been exploring at this conference. I mean the tradition originating with the Romantics -- with Rousseau, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Emerson, Thoreau, and others. I mean a tendency of thought and action that extends forward to Parker and Dewey and the great women of the progressive movement early in the century and then in the 1920s, and on to Deborah Meier and Lillian Weber and others you can name yourselves. Some are pragmatists; some, existentialists; some, critical theorists. Some are whole language people -- writers, many them of them, readers, collectors of particularities, of the looks and sounds of persons and things. Many are weavers of networks, discoverers of links and connections. Many are teachers who understand fully what it means to attend to the needs of children, the voices of children, the life-stories of children. They do so in such a fashion that their teaching often becomes an ongoing reflective dialogue with the young around them; and there are continually new beginnings on both sides, a new consciousness of the unexpected, of the never quite predictable. (All we need to do to summon up situations of this kind is to recall moments of journal writing or storytelling. Or we might think of the meetings of the "family groups" that take place each morning in certain schools. At meetings like this, people come together to hear about what has been transpiring at home, in personal lives: the emergencies, the deaths and illnesses, the surprises, the moments of delight.)

Sometimes it is as if it all takes place to the music of what Wallace Stevens called the "blue guitar," his metaphor for imagination. The guitarist in his poem will not play things only as they are. "Things as they are," he tells his listeners, "are changed upon the blue guitar" (Stevens, 1964, p. 165). Like Dewey, like Virginia Woolf, like Albert Camus, he tells them not to use "the rotted names," but to find their own shapes, to say what *they* see in the dark. And finally: "You as you are? You are yourself. The blue guitar surprises you" (Stevens, 1964, p. 183). There it is again -- a notion of surprise linked to disclosures, linked to beginnings. It has much to do with what we experience as teachers when we attend from

our own lived situations, our consciously lived situations to the variously situated young.

We must remember, of course, that the tradition we have been evoking here and working to keep alive -- or bring alive again -- has always been in tension with another tradition in this country, perhaps as old as the orthodoxies of an unsmiling Puritanism, certainly coexistent with the rise of industry, with what has been called the entry of "the locomotive into the garden." It might be linked to the Gatsbyan dream (which I am sure can be remembered from ***The Great Gatsby***) -- Gatsby's image of himself as the "Son of God who must be about His Father's business, the service of a vast, vulgar, meretricious beauty" (Fitzgerald, 1974, p. 96). Whatever was valuable about the original dream (of freedom, happiness, fulfillment) is corrupted now in Fitzgerald's novel by the "foul dust," the Valley of Ashes. It is being laid waste by racism, classism, sexism, and the terrible carelessness that allowed people like Tom and Daisy "to smash up things and creatures and then retreat back into their money or their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made..." (Fitzgerald, 1974, p. 176).

Where education is concerned, that corrupted dream has meant (in a variety of forms) managing children, categorizing them, neglecting many of them. It has meant making them subordinate to the demands of business and, nowadays, technology, putting words into their mouths, treating them -- even speaking of them -- as "resources" rather than as living persons. Or it has meant dividing them between those deemed fit to enter the particular House of Intellect thought to serve the interests of prevailing power, and those condemned to the rudiments, to the basics, to "functional literacy," and little more besides. Sorted, managed, trained, sometimes seduced, they have not been regarded or attended to as persons with the right and responsibility to reflect upon themselves, to construct knowledge, nor to engage in the cultural conversation. Rarely have they been enabled to articulate purposes for themselves or to find a meaning for their lives.

Today, as we well know, we are confronting much of this again. We hear about the constant emphasis on testing, on privatization, on corporate interventions, on the kind of "free choice" that threatens to leave numbers of the young behind. As John Kenneth Galbraith has said, "There is something bizarre in an Education President urging education reform when school districts are curtailing the school term, freezing or cutting teachers' pay, and, in some extreme cases, threatening to close schools for lack of money." Bizarre, yes, but of a piece with ignoring the public when education is spoken of, complaining about school failures, suggesting that schools be taken over by business with effective management techniques. If they are, we are told, more and more of the young will be trained in the kind of conceptual work presumably required to maintain our technology and keep us competitive in the world. Little, if anything, is said about the deskilling taking place among those slated for the service industries and menial jobs. Little is done about the socioeconomic devastation, the poverty, the homelessness, the racial tensions that make education so difficult for the "disadvantaged" to achieve.

This is not to suggest that these factors prevent us from educating altogether. I am

simply saying that they present fearful barriers that have to be acknowledged, that have to be understood and -- on some level -- refused. It remains important for those who teach and for those who choose to learn to keep alive a notion of what ought to be. It remains important to look at things as if they could be otherwise, to insist they can be otherwise. I think of Vaclav Havel writing to his wife Olga from prison, refusing to accept hopelessness, forever telling himself, "If you are open to hope, you can find timid signals in many things..." (Havel, 1989, p. 372). He spoke of youth movements, peace movements, activities in defense of human rights, ecological initiatives. And he reminded Olga of "the constantly recurring attempts to create authentic and meaningful communities that rebel against a world crisis, not merely to escape from it, but to devote their full efforts -- with the clear-sighted deliberation and humility that always goes with genuine faith -- to assume responsibility for the state of the world" (Havel, 1989, p. 372).

As we deal with our own difficult challenges, some of that spirit ought to be kept alive among us, especially since -- day after day in our teaching -- we are indeed assuming responsibility in the way Havel had in mind. We know we can educate everyone's children if we are provided decent opportunities and some modicum of support. We know, if we attend adequately, that we can enable the children of strangers, just as well as the children of neighbors, to become active in the naming of their worlds. We know we can stimulate them to compose their own narratives, using the various intelligences at their command, helping us to understand how it is with them, even as we help them begin to grasp the shape and interpret the concreteness of their lives. We have to keep acknowledging the contradictions, the dialectic as we move; we have to learn to live with the unresolved. Yes, we want the young to participate in shaping their own pedagogies and devising their own literacies. We want to enable them to make meaning, to say clearly what they see, what they feel. Perhaps especially we want to create atmospheres of thoughtfulness, atmospheres where individuals can pose their own questions and do research -- contextual research -- on their own lives, their own communities. Affirming their groundedness, proud of their groundedness (like the children in the Foxfire schools), they may reach out to learn the techniques, the tricks of the trade they need for surviving. They may consciously try to master what they need to know to cope with the new technologies and, at once, to deal with the languages of power. Of course it is the case that the dominant interest for many -- stimulated as they are by television, rock and rap music, video -- is to pursue by any means at hand the Gatsbyan dream (or the "Dallas" or the "Dynasty" dream). It is the dream of the "good life" exemplified by the green light at the end of the dock, or the expensive car, or the audio equipment, or the gold jewelry. As in the early days of the common school, the lure is to be found in the promise of success.

In these days, we are discovering the deceptive frailties of that goal; and more and more Americans are setting their sights for the achievement of some minimal security. Linda Darling-Hammond and others here have talked about attention being paid to community work and community involvement in certain schools. Some of you have read of the young people at Bronx Regional High School who came together to build a shelter for their homeless classmates. Others have come together to create tutoring programs or recycling campaigns

or intergenerational designs. Commissioner Sobol finished his talk by mentioning what it might signify to help children to find something to believe in again -- to find a cause. I thought back to the Civil Rights movement when he said that, to moments during the peace movement, to AIDS marches, to -- as Havel said -- the various efforts to create communities "that rebel against a world in crisis."

I am not talking this way in a spirit of righteousness or because I am seeking new motivations to move the young to learn. It is because, like those young people and like many of you, I find it necessary to look for a meaning in life, a purpose for it all; and I know we each have to create one for ourselves -- out of the conversation, out of the dialogue in which we all hope to be engaged. I mentioned the contradictions, the unresolved tensions; and we cannot put them aside. On the one hand, there is the desperate need on the part of each person to *be*, to trust, to become, to leave a decent thumbprint on the world, to hold someone else's hand. And there is our deep desire, as teachers, to invent pedagogies that are rooted in such needs and longings, that enable persons to become reflective and critical and active, to become participants in the common world. But, on the other hand, there are the enticements and seductions of a not always humane or even rational society, with its eroding authorities, its lack of role models, its voids where there ought to be networks and supports.

We have to teach to such a tension; we have to work for critical insight into what constrains and what releases, what sickens and what restores. We must redefine and reaffirm what we conceive to be the moral commitments of our community, what principles we associate with democracy: freedom, justice, regard for integrity, mutuality of concern. Our hope is to awaken a sense of compassion and responsibility that will move the young to incarnate such principles as they learn to live together. In part, this involves the capacity to take heed of what is lacking in the immediate situation and in the world around (food, adequate shelter, racial understanding, sympathy, ordinary human care). Often, the creation of a vision of a better social order, the imagining of something better, can lead people to see the deficiencies in what exists and arouse them to want to repair. That is why visions like Havel's and Martin Luther King's are so important. It is why the reading of certain works of literature can be important, the seeing of certain films and plays -- engagements that arouse the imagination and enable persons to break through the taken-for-granted, the "given," toward what might be. (Think of the sudden openings in experience made possible by Toni Morrison's novels and Borges' fables and Grace Paley's short stories and Seamus Heany's or Elizabeth Bishop's poetry.)

We want to set the young imagining and opening perspectives, as we work to understand their points of view and try to connect with the ways in which they see and feel things. We want to help them become articulate enough to join what is called the "conversation" that in many senses defines our culture. It is a conversation of many voices that has been going on over time; and we have been working lately to expand it so that the long-silenced and the long-ignored can be heard. We hope that conversation can be understood as emergent from many contesting voices, from many places, and in many tones; and we want our students to learn to listen as they learn to read, to use their own voices in

spaces where they can be free.

Our venture is, and will remain, serious no matter how much restructuring we are able to do. The conservative tendencies in the society will endanger those who are not prepared as they subordinate them to market demand. The carelessness, those models rooted in the national security system, the resistance to pluralism and to difference: these have to remain visible even as we develop the kind of pedagogies empowering the young to refuse such things. When we think of such tensions and strive for resolutions, I hope we can keep in mind not only the significance of care and caring, but the importance of connectedness and relationality. The tradition we cherish, the tradition of teaching and learning that we have been talking about these two days, is one that has to be struggled for, that can never be taken for granted, simply because it is so deeply at odds with quantification and exclusion and hierarchies and the sound of marching feet.

It is a tradition that has to be chosen over and over by persons coming together in the names of the young, of civility, of democracy, and of a common world. That brings me back to Hannah Arendt again, talking about how much more important the relation between grown-ups and children is than any pedagogical science and recollection; we have all come into the world by being born, and this world is constantly renewed through birth. She said:

> Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it and by the same token save it from that ruin which, except for renewal, except for the coming of the new and young, would be inevitable. And education, too, is where we decide whether we love our children enough not to expel them from our world and leave them to their own devices, nor to strike from their hands their chance of undertaking something new, something unforeseen by us, but to prepare them in advance for the task of renewing a common world (Arendt, 1961, p. 196).

She knew how important it was for the young to shape their own narratives and, by so doing, bring something new into the world, even as they learned how to look through multiple perspectives and how to read that world. Arendt also knew that to love someone was to set that person free to explore new possibilities. She spoke of a broadened world to be made and remade and cherished. She talked of pluralities, of persons speaking in agent-revealing voices as "who" and not "what" they were. By means of such speaking and such disclosure, people can weave webs of relationship among themselves, bringing into existence remarkable "in-betweens."

I like to think of such learner-centered classrooms where there is room for openings, for informed interpretations, for entries into new forms of life. This can happen even as the dialogues go on and unexpected vistas on experience are revealed. It can happen when and if teachers and students reach out together in full awareness that the contradictions can never be fully overcome, but aware somehow that it is up to them to define alternatives and thrust open doors through which they can move.

Yes, we want new habits of mind. We want to enable the young to conceptualize, to use concepts, to mediate reality -- even as they keep hold of their lived worlds. We are surely together in choosing to engage the young with construction of many kinds of knowledge for the sake of understanding and, yes, for the sake of consciousness and self-formation. We are indeed in tension when it comes to our understandable desires to resist the "pop," the formulaic, the habitual by imposing what we think of as transformative views and styles of being. We recognize that these have to be consciously chosen by active learners serious about their own quests; but the passivity and, yes, the running shoes and the leather jackets and the earrings and the media sophistication loom like obstacles to what we conceive as the liberation of the young. We all need to ponder more deeply the spectrum of languages and modes of address that may be necessary if the young in their diversity are really to be provoked to reach beyond as members of what often seems to them a questionable community. Aliveness on the part of the teacher is the important thing, Martin Buber once said, and passion and a stubborn love for knowing -- aliveness -- and a refusal of the routine and the sterile and the petrified. We have to listen, to pay heed, to help the young not only find but hone their varied voices, as never before.

We are all committed to a view of teaching rooted in a trust of the young, in a faith in learning as exploration and as search. We are committed, in spite of our realization that there are no easy answers in a society that seems so indifferent or hostile to what we cherish as our ideals. This is a world where meanings have to be created by all sorts of people, including strangers. It is a world where new lovely shapes can still emerge, where more and more living beings can come together in shared quests for meaning, as we have done in the days of this conference. We are in search of opportunities to write and rewrite our own lives, we who are teachers. We will do that as we read along with the young, as we keep rereading and rewriting and renewing (in the face of fragmentations and cruelties and neglect) what still may be a common world.

I never know how to end, except with a poem; and I have four short lines from Rainer Marie Rilke (who may not be relevant today at all). I think the lines are relevant, because they have to do with loving and with craft. And I believe they have to do with something that we all desire to communicate in the learner-centered classrooms to come. These are from a small verse called "With Strokes That Ring Clear":

> There is nothing so small but I love it and choose
> to paint it gold-groundly and great
> and hold it most precious and know not whose
> soul it may liberate... (Rilke, 1977, p. 3).

To think; to liberate; to renew: there may be no better way of becoming alive.

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